

Consequently, an action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Maier', written over the printed name.

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IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 1, lines 7-11, with the following:

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

This is a continuation of International Application PCT/JP00/01075, with an international filing date of February 25, 2000, the entire content of which being hereby incorporated herein by reference[.], which was not published in English.

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